



# THE VOICE

Vanguard University of Southern California  
Student Newspaper

## THIS ISSUE'S FEATURED ARTICLES:

- 2-3 Being a Faith-based Leader
- 4 Celebrating Joni Prado
- 5 How APIC Celebrated the Lunar New Year
- 6 Game Changers for Transitioning to Career
- 7 Is Space Travel Worth the Cost?
- 8-9 The Scarcity of English Majors
- 10 Welcoming the Lions Arena!
- 11 U.S. Ambassador Richmond on Human Trafficking
- 12-13 Multiversal Consequences
- 14 Announcements
- 15 The Newsroom
- 16 Call to Writers and Photographers



Scott Academic Center. Photo by Vanguard University Alumni

### About Us

*The Vanguard Voice* is the student newspaper of Vanguard University. Managed under the auspices of the English Department, *The Vanguard Voice* is a student-run publication that functions with the assistance of a faculty advisor. This newspaper provides campus news, information about students, programs and faculty, as well as a public forum for student opinion via an online and hard copy publication.

### Mission Statement

*The Vanguard Voice* is a forum for student expression that engages, informs and entertains the university community. We strive to be a credible, knowledgeable and thoughtful resource for news and opinion.

## FEATURE COLUMN

### Being a Faith-based Leader

By Jenna Kallal

Vanguard University is an Assemblies of God institution that was created to prepare students for ministry.

Over time, Vanguard transitioned into a university with different majors so students could apply for jobs in all areas of discipline.

The Spiritual Formation Department (SFD) strives to maintain that Christ exists at the center of the Vanguard University community.

SFD plays an active role in incorporating Jesus Christ into students' everyday lives.

There is a great amount of thought and hard work that goes into every chapel session, Shine chapel service, and other events across campus. Considering the impact of SFD, it is important for current Vanguard students to understand what SFD spiritual roles are and what they mean for our campus.

*What does it mean to be a faith-based student leader?*

In an interview, Administrative Chaplain and Theology Major, Peyton Smith, explained that a chaplain is a student who can facilitate chapels and holds background responsibilities.

There are different roles within the chaplain title and one example Smith gave is a small group chaplain. Small Group Chaplains construct small group opportunities for all students to be a part of.

A major aspect of taking on faith-based student leadership is guiding students on their spiritual journey whether it is through conversation or prayer.

According to Smith, it can be nerve-racking to be seen as a person of influence among your peers.



Image by Vanguard University

"I'm a student first," Smith explained and continued to mention, "I understand the student aspect more than the chaplain aspect because I'm walking the walk with you."

She went on to discuss how just like other students, she also goes through the same seasons of midterms and having a job. SFD does take up a great amount of her time, but many other SFD student leaders have responsibilities alongside SFD and a full class schedule.

Other than the great amount of discussion and planning that goes into chapels, Shines and other activities, these student leaders prepare individually for their tasks at hand.

Each spiritual leader is on their own journey with God and is able to tie it in to how they facilitate speaking and worshipping.

Smith mentioned that for the Shine she led, she just had to sit and listen to God.

She continued on to say, "Sometimes it takes stepping away and being in a quiet place."

She later elaborated on her work with SFD and stated that she wants her work to be intentional. These chaplains are on real journeys with the Lord and are opening up to the student body to share their experiences.

## FEATURE COLUMN

It has been more difficult in the past few semesters because SFD had to completely alter how they approach faith-based events since the onset of the global pandemic. SFD navigated filming chapels, but now they are adapting to the requirements of COVID-19 for in-person chapels.

Smith talked about how there were a few questions that SFD had to take into consideration as the Fall semester began including:

How do we want SFD to look like this year? How do we reshape everything?

**SFD WANTS TO ACCEPT ALL STUDENTS AND GIVE THEM THE OPPORTUNITIES TO CONNECT WITH THE LORD.**



Peyton Smith photographed by Jenny Rogers

This spiritual position can bring on pressure whether it is completing tasks, focusing on individual growth, or focusing on the growth of the student body as a whole.

“I’m learning a lot about time management,” Smith explained and proceeded to say, “I’m learning to be intentional with myself, and learning to be intentional with the other people that I want to invite into my life.”

This position teaches valuable life skills to students as they move on to graduation and begin their careers. It also helps students who want to go into faith-based careers and prepares them for what may come in the future.

Smith hopes to go into Missions Coordination or Missions Pastoring. Through her current position at SFD, she has been able to see what actually happens in ministry rather than what volunteers or attendees see. This has helped shape her decisions for her future in a spiritual career.

Even though there are many clear assets to chapel and the chapel services offered at VU, there are students in attendance who just want to get their chapel credits done.

This can make it difficult to connect with students who go to chapel for credit. To conclude the interview, Smith was asked how it felt that some students don’t take chapel seriously?

She responded, “For me personally, it’s like an ‘Aw man... dang,’ there is such a value to chapel that it is sad to hear of students like this, but it’s also part of our jobs to be understanding and that is okay. It is not a priority to some people, but we love everyone as they are. We are glad you show up.”

SFD wants to accept all students and give them the opportunities to connect with the Lord.

## FEATURE COLUMN

## Celebrating 20 years of Pursuing Music at Vanguard University Featuring Joni Prado

By *Bertha Cuellar*

Teaching music initially was not Joni Prado's career choice, but more of a side hobby. She never really intended to study music. Little did Joni Prado know, she would find herself 20 years later – teaching music to university students and sharing her joy of music to others.

Dr. Prado explains, "Upon my completion of a Music and Psychology degree, all of the doors for graduate school in music swung wide open and offered opportunities that I had never dreamed of, or even considered."

Joni Prado received her DMA (Doctor of Musical Arts) at USC and has many musical accomplishments. Prado had the opportunity to conduct at Carnegie Hall in 2019 and it is one of her most memorable experiences. She reminisces on memorable memories including Opera Scenes, WC Broadway Shows, Chamber Choir concerts, and the LIFE song tour to AZ. She has grown to love and cherish the dynamic, both in and out of performance, in the choral groups.

Reflecting on her time at Vanguard, Joni Prado is reminded of how the Lord had a plan for her beyond what she could have ever dreamed. Prado arrived at VU in 2002 and felt something special at about arriving to the campus.

"When I came to interview, I took a brief tour of the campus and just felt a rhythm, like a heartbeat telling me that Vanguard was a very special place, and it instantly felt like home," Prado explains.

After teaching for so many years, she came to a point where she no longer felt the need to prove herself as a young female professor, but instead, she changed her approach.

"Something I have learned is that you can't work for anyone's approval, or recognition. Do what you love and love what you do! Do what you love and love what you do! Your work will stand for itself when done with excellence, and God honors that in the end!"

She began to focus on her energy on helping students, which led to a tremendous growth in the program. She holds a desire that students upon graduating not leave with just a diploma but leave inspired.

"I want students to leave inspired. That somehow, I have impacted their lives in such a way, that they want to also find ways to inspire and impact others. I want them to see how pursuing excellence in all areas of our life is a posture of worship," Prado explains.

To celebrate Prado's 20 years of teaching, A reunion benefit concert will be held on February 26. The Behold How Good Concert will feature songs and Alumni from the last 20 years of Prado's teaching. Including Alumni, felt to be an essential part of the celebration, as to inspire others current students to see the long line of singers and for them to be inspired of being part of the Vanguard Music Legacy.

"It's almost like a "This is Your Life" recap of the last 20 years! More than a celebration, it is my hope and vision that it will be a beautiful reunion of so many students who have come through our ensembles here at Vanguard."

Prado in the past 20 years, has grown a deeper love not only for music and her students, but for her job where she can inspire other to pursue life with an attitude of worship and desire to pursue excellence. "We should to our utmost best with what we have been given. I love watching students grow and develop their gifts, find confidence, and become leaders. I honestly have the best job in the world!"

Here's to your 20 years of excellence, Dr. Joni Prado.



Benefit Concert Image by Vanguard University



## LIFE COLUMN

## How APIC Celebrated the Lunar New Year

By *Theresa Nguyen*

On February 2, 2022, the Asian and Pacific Islander Club (APIC) at Vanguard University celebrated Lunar New Year, an important holiday in many Asian cultures.

“The purpose of celebrating Lunar New Year is to reflect on the past year while also welcoming the new possibilities of the upcoming year,” Hannah Akamine, APIC President states. “Lunar New Year means a fresh start.”

After a tumultuous 2021 year, the celebration is much needed. The New Years celebration not only allows for new beginnings, but also gives people the ability to enjoy Asian traditions involving food and festivities.

Signifying good fortune and prosperity, Lunar New Year is a time for families and friends to ring in the New Year with an array of food and festivities. APIC brought the age-old tradition of Lunar New Year festivals to Vanguard’s campus with a celebration in the Towers Lobby.

Activities included making paper lanterns, giving red envelopes and most importantly, enjoying a variety of Asian cuisine– all of which have deep cultural significance. “Creating paper lanterns honors our ancestors and welcomes in peace, prosperity, and reconciliation for the new year,” Akamine states.

**LUNAR NEW YEAR IS A FUN AND INTERESTING WAY FOR PEOPLE TO GET EDUCATED ON ASIAN CULTURE. BEING ABLE TO EXPERIENCE AUTHENTIC FESTIVITIES ALONGSIDE ONE ANOTHER FOSTERS A SENSE OF UNITY — A BRIDGE BETWEEN CULTURES.**

“The noodles at the celebration symbolize longevity, and tea is for happiness and hope.”

Lunar New Years serves as a slice of familiarity for the Asian community on campus, as well as an opportunity for students to immerse themselves into other cultures.

“My favorite part of the event would definitely have to be the dumplings and the conversations that followed,” one attendee states. “Having informative conversations about Asian-American culture was an extremely enriching experience.”

Akamine says that Lunar New Year is a fun and interesting way for people to get educated on Asian culture. Being able to experience authentic festivities alongside one another fosters a sense of unity– a bridge between cultures.

Learn more about Lunar New Year and APIC on Instagram @apicvu.



## OPINION COLUMN

## Game Changers for Transitioning to Career

By Chip Espinoza, Ph.D.  
Interim Provost, Vanguard University

A good percentage of my academic and professional career has been committed to helping young professionals transition from college to career. I have had the privilege of speaking all over the world working with Fortune 500 Companies, Non-profits, and Governments. I owe it all to students in my management classes at Vanguard who encouraged me to research and write on the subject.

I would like to share three things that are game changers when you enter career. I encourage you to practice them while you are preparing for career here at Vanguard.

**1) Learn how to engage in conversation with other generations** (particularly older ones). Don't wait for people to approach you, you take the initiative. One of the biggest challenges expressed by young professionals in my research was "communicating with older people." Twenty percent were good at it, and it was no surprise they were the first to be hired and promoted. Don't wait to get overwhelmed before you make the effort to communicate.

*Warning: When you don't go to your manager and ask questions, s/he thinks you don't care about your job.*

**2) Show gratitude.** I know it seems simplistic, but it is a lost art in our society. There is an unfair perception that young professionals are entitled or lack appreciation for the effort others make on their behalf. A study at Cal State Fullerton discovered the best way to overcome being perceived as entitled is to show gratitude. You can practice showing gratitude with family members, former teachers, pastors, campus security, Vanguard staff, professors, and the like. Identify a person who helped you get to the place you are today and thank them. Dr. Warren Bennis was one of the more prolific writers on leadership in the 20th Century. I once asked him, "What is something he learned about great leaders that is so simple yet differentiates them from other leaders." He said great leaders are "first-class noticers." Be a first-class noticer when it comes to people investing you.

*Warning: When you fail to show gratitude, people stop doing nice things for you.*

**3) Invest in yourself before you expect others to invest in you.** This should be easy for you since you are already doing that by pursuing an education. Look for opportunities to engage in special projects and personal development. Don't wait for your company to pay for certifications and the like. The biggest barrier of transition to career from college is a lack of experience. Much of the activity you have engaged in at Vanguard University is transferrable experience. Whether you have led a mission trip, served on a worship team, captained a sports team, done work-study, or volunteered in the local community, it will be valuable to your career.

*Warning: A lack of experience will be thrown in your face—don't let it end the conversation. Be prepared to talk about your transferrable experience.*

Thank you for choosing Vanguard! I know you will make us look good!



Dr. Chip Espinoza. Photo by Vanguard University

## OPINION COLUMN

**Is Space Travel Worth the Cost?***By: Emily Dodge-Davis*

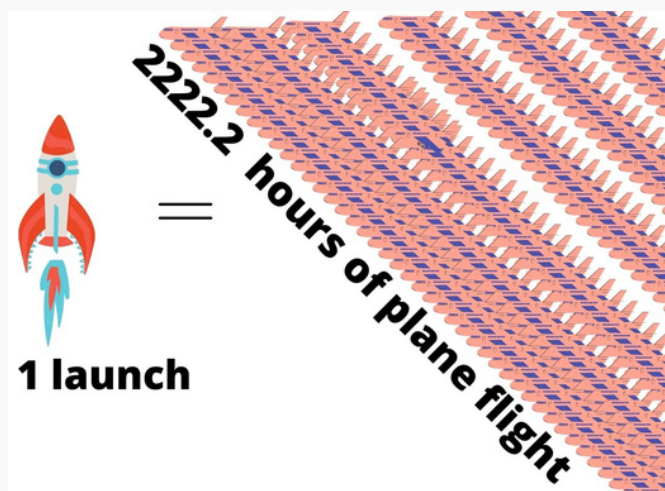
According to the NASA Associate Administrator for Communications, Bettina Inclán, in a news conference, over ten million people turned on their televisions, computers, phones, and any other device that could stream and on May 30, 2020, they all watched the first astronauts from a private commercial spaceflight company ascend into space.

SpaceX is the first company to achieve this commercial feat. There are many other companies such as Virgin Galactic and Blue Origin, with the same goal of commercializing spaceflight. As mankind sends everyday passengers into space, what impact will we be leaving on the Earth which first allowed us to dream of the stars?

A 2020 University of Dayton research article, “Impact of Space Travel” by Ryan Simkins, Patrick Ruhala, Drew Whalen and Advised by Dr. Erin Gibbemeyer stated, “Due to the newness of space travel, the costs and impacts aren’t fully known so to understand current and future space travel, we must use historical data.”

Despite the current inability to properly understand the full environmental cost of spaceflight, caution is still urged by the authors of “Impact of Space Travel”.

This subject should not just be approached with caution, but with the knowledge that commercial spaceflight has a real and current negative environmental effect.



SpaceX Falcon 9 Launch by SpaceX on Unsplash



SpaceX Falcon 9 Launch by SpaceX on Unsplash

One commercial space launch can emit 200-300 tonnes of carbon dioxide according to Eloise Marais, an associate professor of physical geography at University College London. To compare, one commercial airplane will emit, on average, 90kg of carbon dioxide per hour according to the Air Transport Action group.

The amount of carbon dioxide pollution released from a one-hour plane flight is .00045 of a commercial launch for four to five people. However, the current impact of commercial space flights is negligible because they only launch a few times a year. When commercial spaceflight companies start routinely travelling, that is when the pollution problem begins.

In their 2018 National Space Exploration Campaign Report, NASA stated, “In pursuit of a timely development and transition of commercial capabilities in LEO, where NASA envisions being one of many customers in the mid-2020s, the Administration is requesting \$150 million in FY2019 (with increasing investments in subsequent years) for a new Commercial LEO Development program. These funds will stimulate the development and 16 maturation of private sector entities and capabilities that will ensure commercial successors to the ISS [...] operational by 2025.”

The increase in commercial spaceflights are not only expected but financially encouraged by NASA. This financial expectation and promotion of the increase of commercial space flights will lead to a negative environmental impact.



## OPINION COLUMN

**The Scarcity of English Majors***By: Megan Luebberman*

From informative essays, to dramatic poetry, to hard-hitting newspaper articles, English majors write in a variety of ways, entrancing readers with their words. They study literature influenced by culture, politics, time periods, and authors' personal lives, to better understand the world and themselves. English is a versatile subject that can be studied to go into a multitude of careers including teaching, law, journalism, copywriting, administration, and so much more.

So, the question is, why are there so few English majors?

At Vanguard University specifically, the English department has always been relatively small.

Warren Doody, Professor of English, Chair of the English Department, and Associate Dean of the Division of Education, Arts and Humanities, shares how many English Majors there have been over the years.

"This year's number of English majors is 39, which isn't bad compared to other years. Here is the breakdown over the last several years:"

2021-22: 39  
 2020-21: 37  
 2019-20: 43  
 2018-19: 44  
 2017-18: 42  
 2016-17: 36  
 2015-16: 30  
 2014-15: 24

He suggests that this may be the norm for a college of Vanguard's size, with numbers always staying in the mid-30s and mid-40s for the most part.

However, it's still seen nation-wide how the number of Humanities majors overall is on the decline. As to why this is occurring overall, and specifically to the department of English, several English majors at Vanguard have suggested reasons.

Michael Robles, Junior English major with a creative writing emphasis, is a part of the teaching ITEP program at Vanguard University.

Robles gives several possible theories for the scarcity in English majors. He suggests that one reason may be students' distaste for essay-writing.

"I feel like essay-writing is definitely one of the least-liked assignments for high school and college students, so to go into a major where that is a focal point on what you do, doesn't interest many people."

Robles also comments on the emphasis there is placed on jobs in STEM, which brings attention away from the humanities department as a whole. He states that it comes down to those two things. Students' interest in reading and writing, and students' desire for a career in the English field.

Jared Rhone, sophomore English major with an emphasis in journalism, hopes to go into the field of sports journalism once he graduates from Vanguard. He began as a Communications major initially, but switched to English because his main goal was to improve and diversify his writing abilities. Rhone explains the scarcity in English majors from a few different viewpoints, the first being that

Communications majors are very similar to English ones. He suggests that more students do go into an English-related field, just not as English majors. In regards to these students, Rhone says:

"Even though they may have similar skill sets, interests, general motivations, Comm seems to get the majority of the people." Rhone also postulates that literature can be a daunting subject to study. He theorizes that:

"Another reason there are so few English majors is because they are intimidated and/or deterred when they see classes about literature from hundreds of years ago or classical eras. Because of this, I feel there are people who take English as a minor instead so they can avoid the bulk of those classes."

Rebekah Pinedo, sophomore English major, hopes to be an English teacher one day and also possibly to work in administration.

Like Rhone, she emphasizes how the large amount of reading and writing that comes with being an English major can be daunting.



## OPINION COLUMN

She also adds that “people tend to underestimate their writing and reading skills. There may also be the misconception that being an English major strictly consists of writing long, research papers. This is not the case. Being an English major fosters the freedom to write creatively while also strengthening research and literary skills.”

Professor Doody gives his insight into the reasons behind it as well. “Regarding the lack of English majors at Vanguard and in general, I think part of it is due to a society that reads less, which makes a major that requires a heavy reading and writing load less attractive.”

He also states that there is a ‘myth’ that English majors don’t have many career opportunities. He corrects this idea, saying: “In fact, it is not hyperbole to say that an English major, one designed to develop writing, as well as critical reading and writing skills, can be beneficial to most lines of work.”

So, the scarcity of English majors, and Humanities majors as a whole, seems to have many contributing factors behind it. It may be partially due to student’s perception of the major, partially due to society’s devaluation of reading, and partially due to an emphasis on other career paths. Whatever it may be, this department seems to remain small.

This smallness has its benefits. English majors at Vanguard have expressed their fondness of the smallness because of the personal nature of the classes and how close relationships with professors can be established.

Students also appreciate the major as a whole, because of the ability to express themselves in a tight-knit group.

Robles explains: “You become vulnerable. Sometimes, you end up putting your heart onto paper, and you feel connected to your work on a whole other level. It’s happened multiple times with me. The English major definitely makes you more connected with your fellow peers because of this, and it shapes you a lot. I’ve grown a lot since I started at Vanguard, and I don’t think I’d be the person I am today if I didn’t go into English.”

While society may need more writers and teachers as a whole, English students can enjoy the benefits of getting their writing closely looked at and discussed in class on a personal level most majors cannot.



Photo by DO on Wallpaper Abyss

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"I'VE GROWN A LOT SINCE I STARTED AT VANGUARD, AND I DON'T THINK I'D BE THE PERSON I AM TODAY IF I DIDN'T GO INTO ENGLISH."

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Michael Robles

## NEWS COLUMN

**Welcoming the Lions Arena!***By Abigail Frank*

On Jan. 5, 2022, it was announced to the students that the Lions Arena will be built in replacement of The Pit. This arena will be three stories tall, with 60,000 square footage. The Pit will be removed during the summer of 2022, with the hope that the arena will be open in 2024. The Lions Arena will create a new area for athletics, as well as new learning spaces.

Laura Capo is the director of Engagement and Development, as well as the Campaign Manager of the University Advancement Team. This position allows her to connect both alumni and friends to the Vanguard community, and in addition she also secures financial resources. Some of the projects in her portfolio include: The Landmark Campaign, Vanguard Giving Day, and the Lions Arena which is Phase II in the Imagine Campaign.

She explained that the, “construction of the Lions Arena will serve as the completion of the student life section of campus. With the opening of the Lions Arena, students will be able to study, gather, experience community, show the Lion pride at an event, or play in an intramural game – all within steps of their dorm rooms.”

Laura Capo also shares that, “The Lions Arena will be a bustling source of pride for the entire Vanguard University community, that will deepen school spirit for all Lions and enhance our athletic, academic, and student life experience.”

In terms of athletics, the gymnasium seat count will be upped to 1,910 from The Pit’s current 900 seats. The Lion’s Arena will also include men and women’s locker rooms, an athletic training room for recovery, a weight room, and concession and ticketing areas. For the athletic personal there will be athletic workstations, offices, and conference spaces.

On the educational side, the Kinesiology department will occupy a large space in the Lions Arena. There will be offices and workstations for staff, as well as a physical therapy lab, a human performance lab, and some general classrooms for students. There will also be student meeting areas, breakout lounges, and study spaces.

This arena will complete the University’s decade-long investment in renovated residence halls, outdoor fields, and the Waugh Student Center. When everything is put together, the dynamic student life core on campus will be accomplished.

Although Vanguard is moving forward in renovating the campus, with the new Lions Arena, The Pit has impacted an immense amount of people including, student athletes, referees, old coaches, alumni, fans, members of the community, and even visiting teams. It’s not necessarily the building itself, but all the amazing memories people have experienced within those four walls.



Vanguard University Pit. Photo by Vanguard University Athletics

The Pit has been the home to men’s and women’s basketball, men’s and women’s volleyball, wrestling, and STUNT teams since it was built in the 1940s. Vanguard teams have collected over 1,000 victories, including several Golden State Athletic Conference Champions and two NAIA National Championships in The Pit.

Lauren is going to miss The Pit. She shared “Games have been won and lost, but we’ve always come together as a school and had each other’s back. Not even just for games, but also for things such as school dodgeball. I really like the fact that it isn’t a huge gym that fits thousands of people. Rather it’s very personal.”

Men’s volleyball player, Valesis Vaisuai, also shared how he felt about the removal of The Pit. He said, “I’m sad, because that’s where the bond of chemistry of this program was formed.”

With the memorable moments in mind, Vanguard is hosting The Pit farewell events. There will be a “Farewell to The Pit: Upper Deck” event on February 17, 2022, at 5:30 p.m. This includes both women and men basketball games starting at 5:30 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. respectively.

There will also be a final “Farewell to The Pit” event on April 29, 2022, at 6:30 p.m. with more details to come. Laura Capo shared, “Our goal [with these farewell events] is to provide an opportunity for our community to say goodbye while being inspired and looking forward to a new facility.” She continues to say, “When hearing from our community it truly is bittersweet to say goodbye to The Pit, so we wanted to provide a ‘season’ for them to have one last experience in this special place.”

Students, alumni, staff, and everyone in between: make sure to attend the farewell events and soak up all the moments in The Pit as possible. But at the same time, get excited for the new experiences and history that will be formed in the new Lions Arena.

## NEWS COLUMN

## U.S. Ambassador Richmond on Human Trafficking

By Emily Miller

On Saturday, February 5, former U.S. Ambassador John Cotton Richmond collaborated with the Global Center for Women and Justice for a discussion on global human trafficking trends, supply chains, and risk mitigation in the Seymour Sanctuary at Vanguard University.

It was an event that informed Orange County residents of what the current world powers are doing to end human trafficking in light of COVID restrictions, and what we can do to create change in our communities and combat human trafficking in our daily lives.

Ambassador Richmond is the former U.S. Ambassador-at-Large to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons for the U.S. Department of State, which is the highest position of power one can have in the U.S. government that is entirely dedicated to fighting human trafficking.

He is also currently a partner at Denton's Federal Regulatory and Compliance Practice. Ambassador Richmond co-founded the Human Trafficking Institute, which empowers law enforcement such as prosecutors and police to be trauma-informed and victim-centered in their methods to not only bring traffickers to justice, but also to treat the trafficked with care and respect.

At this event, Ambassador Richmond shared a presentation on current actions that world nations are taking to combat human trafficking in their businesses and supply chains.

For example, in June 2021, the German Federal Parliament passed the Supply Chain Due Diligence Act, which requires businesses and companies to ensure that the supply chains they used are not guilty of any human trafficking or human rights violations, develop a procedural policy statement on their human rights strategy, create and use a complaint mechanism for others to report possible human rights violations or human trafficking risks, and file yearly reports stating that they fulfilled their due diligence obligations.

This will be enacted starting in January 2023; while this new mandate is only applicable in Germany, it sets a good example for other countries to follow, and with the help of the United Nations, it is likely that other countries will follow suit with similar mandates in the coming years.

## GLOBAL CENTER OF WOMEN &amp; JUSTICE



Being a Voice for Women

In this presentation, he shared the three P's: *prevention*, *protection*, and *prosecution*. Richmond emphasized the importance of preventing human trafficking within businesses and supply chains and being aware of potential human trafficking of businesses and supply chains we may want to purchase from.

Richmond also discussed the importance prosecuting traffickers without sacrificing the physical, mental, and emotional protection of human trafficking victims. Anyone who would like to learn more about local and global human trafficking prevention and how we can all do our part in combatting human trafficking should consider attending events put on by the Global Center of Women and Justice.

One of the GCWJ's key goals is to study the issues in order to prevent them. Hearing from a former U.S. Ambassador who had been in the highest place of authority for combatting human trafficking was highly educational and impactful.



Photo by Hermes Rivera on Unsplash



## ENTERTAINMENT COLUMN

# MULTIVERSAL CONSEQUENCES

*By Kristian Davis*

### WILL THE HYPE DIE OUT AROUND THESE MARVEL MOVIES? WILL THE SPIDERMAN MOVIES END AFTER SPIDERMAN: NO WAY HOME (2021)?

In 2000, a multiverse was born with the success and distribution of the first X-Men movie. In 2002, this multiversal world continued to grow and evolve with the release of Spider-Man. It is no secret that Hollywood has been saturated by the comic book movie/ superhero blockbuster genre.

Marvel Studios' success has set filmmaking precedents repeatedly over the last decade. The success of Avengers: Endgame (2019) made every headline as it soared through box office records becoming the second highest-grossing film of all time. That film took a decade and twenty-one previous movies to make.

What record would Marvel set next? Who would lead the franchise with the exiting of Chris Evans and Robert Downey Jr.? Will the hype die out around these Marvel movies? Will the Spiderman movies end after Spiderman: No Way Home (2021)?

In partnership with Sony Pictures, Marvel Studios has topped what comic book movie fans hoped could happen in a Spider-Man film with their latest release. The film underwent significant story restructuring that resulted in one of the most ambitious projects from Marvel.

As a result, the film has developed some of the most favorable public vocality since Avengers: Endgame. The official synopsis of the film via the Spider-Man: No Way Home website keeps the main plot in focus while underwriting hints at the more significant and groundbreaking developments made within this film.

"For the first time in the cinematic history of Spider-Man, our friendly neighborhood hero's identity is revealed, bringing his Superhero responsibilities into conflict with his normal life and putting those he cares about most at risk. When he enlists Doctor Strange's help to restore his secret, the spell tears a hole in their world, releasing the most powerful villains who've ever fought a Spider-Man in any universe. Now, Peter will have to overcome his greatest challenge yet, which will not only forever alter his own future but the future of the Multiverse."



Image by Sony Pictures /  
Marvel Studios

## ENTERTAINMENT COLUMN

In the months leading to the film's release, it was speculated by many that Marvel Studios had devised a way to incorporate the preexisting Spider-Man franchises into this new film. These previous franchises comprised of 2002's Spider-Man, Tobey Maguire, and 2012's Andrew Garfield's Spider-Man respectively.

Such an endeavor would be unprecedented logistically and in scale for a franchise's continuity writing. However upon release, the world saw what was thought to be impossible for Marvel and Sony to agree to do; putting all three live-action Spider-Men on-screen together.

In order to, uncover the ultimate depth of the decisions made in this film, Noah Stecker, a recent alumnus of Vanguard University and life-long Spider-Man fan, was interviewed for the Vanguard Voice. The interview began with introductory questions to gauge where Mr. Stecker was coming from as a fan.

**Q: What was your first experience with Superhero movies?**

A: Spiderman (2002) as a kid, the fantasy elements were extremely gripping. It was my first experience with fantasy storytelling. The hero and villain were both extremely compelling. The movie holds up today. It still has a good standard of graphic fidelity. The action definitely is corny at moments but that is part of its charm for me.

**Q: What was your first experience with the Marvel Cinematic Universe?**

A: The very first Iron Man movie that started it all.

**Q: Before No Way Home, the latest release, what in your opinion, was the most compelling piece of work from the Marvel Universe?**

A: The Daredevil TV show from Netflix, which is technically canon for the universe.

**Q: What would you say (Spiderman)No Way Home did for this current iteration of the Spiderman Character?**

A: I think in a lot of ways this movie redeemed Holland's Spiderman. Before this, he was living in Iron Man's Shadow. I don't think there's anything wrong with Tom's performance, I think the writing let the character down and it wasn't a good fit for the rest of the franchise. In the new movie he feels in place, the writing feels matured and up to par with the rest of the franchise.

**Q: What would you say is the most influential consequence of this decision to incorporate multiple franchises into the existing ones?**

A: It gives the writers the ability to cater the stories to three different fanbases. They have the MCU spiderman, the Andrew G Spiderman and the Tobey M spiderman. You have strong opinions towards each, and this lets the writers collaborate on each allowing them to please everyone in their own way. I think this will let marvel and Sony who share the rights to Spiderman and related characters to use one of the three spiderman franchises to grow the expanding Sony-Verse of Spiderman characters while still maintaining the Tom Holland Spiderman stories in the MCU.

**Q: Do you have a preference on the now 3 canon spidermen in the MCU? If so, what was it like to see them on screen interacting with the others in this film?**

A: Tobey (Maguire), no question. At first, I think it has great "meme" potential. It was good to finally get closure for the franchise I grew up with that was shut down around 15 years ago now.

**Q: What do you think this movie has done for the existing franchises and the future of this expanding "multiverse"?**

A: I think for the fans of the franchises, this provides a lot of closure for those franchises that got rebooted. We have seen two X-men, three Spidermen, two Fantastic Fours and more. It opens the doors for other franchises to now enter the MCU. I would love to see someone like Hugh Jackman, (famous for playing Wolverine), come into the MCU and give the fans more closure for that franchise. I'm not sure this appeased comic book fans entirely, but this one smoothed over the issues with Tom Holland's franchise for sure.

As Mr. Stecker reflected, Spiderman: No Way Home brought not just another Marvel release, but closure for many fans. The movie currently sits at one of the highest fan ratings for a Marvel movie on the infamous rating website, Rotten Tomatoes. The film has a critic score of 93% and an audience score of 98%.

The film won over the fans of multiple franchises by revitalizing the past and incorporating them into the present day. Marvel continues to challenge movie goers' expectations as the world waits on their next big project: Dr. Strange in the Multiverse of Madness.

# ANNOUNCEMENTS

## THE VANGUARD WRITING CENTER

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The Writing Center is committed to assisting students from all disciplines in a collaborative, Christ-centered environment, and we value students' learning differences and diverse voices. We can help students at any stage of the writing process, including: organizing notes, developing outlines, revising thesis statements, improving organization, or assisting with final editing.

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# The Newsroom

**Jazmin Aguilar**, Staff Writer & Social Media Manager

Jazmin Aguilar enjoys writing and telling stories. She believes everyone has an extraordinary story to tell and it is her passion to hear it.

**Bertha Cuellar**, Staff Writer & Digital Media Designer

Bertha Cuellar is a Public Relations Communication Major & Journalism minor. She is an artist and musician who loves keeping herself involved both in and out of campus. She enjoys writing about her passions and reading fiction.

**Kristian Davis**, Staff Writer & Social Media Manager

Kristian Davis is an avid fan of comic book literature, film, and everything technological!

**Emily Dodge-Davis**, Editor-in-Chief

Emily Dodge is a Senior English major minoring in journalism and part of the VU Scholars program. She hopes to go into copy editing and creative nonfiction writing.

**Warren Doody**, Faculty Advisor

**Dr. Chip Espinoza**, Guest Writer

**Abigail Frank**, Staff Writer & Marketing Editor

Abigail Frank is a freshman at Vanguard. She loves reading, writing, and taking photos when she has time.

**Jenna Kallal**, Staff Writer & Digital Media Designer

Jenna Kallal is a Junior at Vanguard University, majoring in Communications. Journalism is a big passion of hers that she hopes to pursue as a career.

**Kayla Limón**, Staff Writer & Social Media Manager

Kayla Limón is majoring in Communications with an emphasis in PR and a minor in Journalism & Digital Media. She is graduating in Spring '22 and couldn't be more excited.

**Megan Luebberman**, Guest Writer & Copy Editor

Megan Luebberman is a Junior English major, studying creative writing in hopes of writing her own book someday.

**Emily Miller**, Guest Writer

**Theresa Nguyen**, Staff Writer & Copy Editor

Theresa Nguyen is a sophomore at Vanguard, majoring in environmental science.

**Isabella Perez**, Staff Writer & Social Media Manager

Isabella Perez is majoring in Communications at Vanguard. She is emphasizing in Tech/Emerging Media and minoring in Journalism. She enjoys writing, being in nature, cooking, and spending quality time with friends, family, and Jesus!

**Jared Rhone**, Staff Writer & Copy Editor

Jared Rhone is a sophomore at Vanguard. He is an English major with a Journalism minor. He hopes to pursue Sports Journalism in the future.

**Michael Robles**, Guest Writer & Copy Editor

Michael Robles is very passionate about writing, journalism and music. Working on *The Voice* allows him to explore all three and share them on a newsworthy basis.

**Andrea Velasquez-Mejia**, Guest Writer

Andrea Velasquez-Mejia is a senior English major, minoring in Journalism.

**Amanda White**, Faculty Advisor

**Faith Zimmerman**, Staff Writer & Social Media Manager

Faith Zimmerman is a Junior at Vanguard. She enjoys reading, writing, and making videos in her free time.





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